

H.E. Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar
Caretaker Prime Minister
Islamic Republic of Pakistan
Constitution Avenue
G-5/2 Islamabad
Pakistan

Dear H.E. Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar,

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the decision made by the Pakistani government on 3 October 2023 to forcibly deport more than 1.4 million unregistered Afghan refugees from Pakistan. This decision comes amidst a severe human rights and humanitarian crisis facing the Afghan population.

For decades, tens of thousands of Afghan refugees have made Pakistan their home. However, this recent decision will force Afghans back to danger in Afghanistan. Notably, the deportation poses a significant threat to the human rights of Afghan women and girls, including their rights to education, work, and freedom of movement. For most Afghan women and girls, their only chance of gaining formal education is through staying in Pakistan. Additionally, a significant number of refugees, including journalists, human rights defenders, female protestors, artists, and former government officials, would be at imminent risk of persecution and repression by the Taliban, if forced to return to Afghanistan.

The decision also places Afghans across Pakistan at imminent risk of homelessness, livelihoods loss, lack of access to essential services, and family separation, especially as the harsh winter approaches.

Since 1 November 2023, the crackdown on unregistered Afghan refugees have resulted in arbitrary arrests and separation of families including minors, women, and older people. Detention [centres](#) for deportation purposes have been established. Media, lawyers, civil society, and even family members of those detained are not allowed to access them. Afghan refugees' houses have been demolished, and properties confiscated. Several cases have been documented of Afghan refugees with proper documentation being deported by the authorities. The government has also announced [expulsion of documented refugees](#) in the "next phase" of deportations.

The forced deportations, along with the crackdown on Afghan refugees, violate Pakistani government's international legal obligations, notably the principle of non-refoulement.

I therefore urge you to:

- **Stop the crackdown on Afghan refugees, immediately halt forced returns of Afghans and reverse your decision.**
- **Immediately release refugees arbitrarily detained in detention centres and further refrain from detaining Afghan refugees.**
- **Create pathways for obtaining timely documentation and renewing all expired visas especially of at-risk populations, such as women and girls, human rights defenders, journalists, and religious and *gender minorities*.**

Yours sincerely,